Decreasing population of Vanraji Samooh in Pithoragarh and Champawat

†157. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the population of Vanraji Samooh in Pithoragarh and Champawat is decreasing constantly;

(b) the immediate measures being taken by the Ministry to save these groups from malnutrition, diseases and financial straits;

(c) whether Government are considering to set up a working group to study the problems of these primitive tribes;

(d) if so, by when the working group would be constituted; and

(e) if not, the alternative steps being taken to study the reasons for their decreasing population and finding solutions thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) There is no such notified Scheduled Tribe in Uttarakhand by the name of Vanraji Samooh. However, as per records, there is one Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) called 'Raji'. As per 2001 census, population of 'Raji' in Pithoragarh and Champawat districts were 364 & 99 respectively. Data for previous years is not separately available in respect of these districts.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Sexual harassment of working women

158. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that sexual harassment/eve-teasing is the major problem being faced by the working women;

(b) whether the above abuse leads to drop in the performance at work places, increase in absenteeism and a victim could go to depression which could change her life forever; and

(c) if so, what is the action plan of Government to enforce strict rules to control this offensive behaviour, both in Government and private establishments, to ensure a sense of security to women workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir. Sexual harassment/ eve-teasing is one of the problems faced by women including working women. According to the data furnished by National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, 29951 cases of sexual harassment/eve-teasing were registered in the country under Section 509 IPC during the years 2004 to 2006. The National Commission for Women received 472 complaints of sexual harassment at workplace during the years 2005 to 2007 (till September).

(b) Government has not undertaken any specific study in this regard. However, according to the general recommendations of the United Nations (UN) Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) relating to violence and equality in employment, sexual harassment is humiliating conduct and may constitute health and safety problems and creates a hostile working environment.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The steps taken by the Government are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of steps taken by the Government to implement the guidelines laid down by the supreme Court and to create awareness about the issue of sexual harassment at workplace

* The Government has requested all the Central Ministries/Departments, Chief Secretaries of all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, Universities/ Institutions, Central Board of Secondary Education, All India Council of Technical Education to constitute complaints committees and to ensure that the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in the Vishaka case for prevention of sexual harassment at workplace are implemented.

* The National Commission for Women (NCW) formulated a Code of Conduct for Workplace, putting down the Supreme Court's guidelines mentioned above in a simple manner. This has been circulated to State Commissions for Women, Non-Governmental Organisations, the apex bodies of the Corporate Sector, Public Sector undertakings, Media, Ministries/Departments and other institutions.

* The NCW has instituted a series of interactive meetings with Public Sector Undertakings/Banks/Universities/Educational Institutions/Hotels/Media etc. to assess the extent of implementation of the guidelines.

* Department of Public Enterprises issued circular in May, 1998 to all administrative Ministries/Departments concerned with Central Public Sector Establishments to direct the Chief Executives of CPSEs under their administrative control for adherence and compliance of the Supreme Court's guidelines on prevention of sexual harassment by making amendments in the CDA Rules of the CPSEs.

* So far as implementation of the Supreme Court guidelines in regard to setting up of complaint committee in small establishments like shops and call centres are concerned section 1(3) of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1947 applies to every establishment wherein 100 and more workers are employed. However, appropriate Government may apply the provisions of the Act to any industrial establishment employing less than 100 persons. Since the State Governments are the appropriate Government in respect of commercial establishments like shops and call centres, necessary instructions have been issued by the Ministry of Labour and Employment during January, 2005 to all Labour Secretaries asking them to take suitable action to apply the provisions of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 to small establishments like call centres and shops in the unorganized sector.

* The Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 have been amended to include sexual harassment as a misconduct. The Central Civil Services (Control, Classification and Appeal) Rules, 1965 have been amendment during July, 2004 to provide that the Complaints Committee established in each Ministry or Department or Office for inquiring into complaints of sexual harassment shall be deemed to be the inquiry authority appointed by the disciplinary authority and the Complaints Committee shall hold the inquiry as far as practicable in accordance with the procedure laid down in these rules (*i.e.* the procedure for holding inquiry into disciplinary proceedings for award of a major penalty).

* Amendments have been made to the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 so that the sexual harassment of women at workplace in the private sector could constitute an offence for which a workman is liable for disciplinary action.

* Media campaign has been undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to create awareness on various issues concerning women and children, including compliance with the Supreme Court's guidelines on the prevention of sexual harassment of women at workplace.

Legislation for nutrition of children

159. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights recommended for legislation to ensure nutrition for children up to six years age group;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendation;

(c) whether it is a fact that her Ministry has held consultations in this regard; and

(d) if so, the outcome of such consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Review Committee for anganwadi workers

160. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 262, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 11th December, 2006 and state:

(a) whether the Review Committee constituted by Government to examine the current levels of honorarium and related issues of anganwadi workers and anganwadi helpers has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the recommendations of the Committee; and

(c) the action taken by Government, based on the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) The Review Committee constituted to examine the current levels of honorarium and related issues of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers, has submitted its report and the same is under the consideration of the Government.

Initiatives to arrest sex ratio

161. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning a major policy initiatives to arrest the falling sex ratio in the country by providing cash as well as non cash incentives to families with girl children;